



Forum on

Transportation Investment

September 2004

Idaho Transportation Department forms statewide transportation investment study

Forum on Transportation Investment Members

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Idaho will face many significant challenges in the future. Preservation of our valued quality of life and enhancement of our natural resources will be principal among them. Growth will impact life in the urban as well as rural communities across the state. Business forces are at work changing the very nature of our state's economics. It is an exciting and vibrant time to live in Idaho.

In order to provide Idaho's elected officials, businesses, industry and community leaders a way to discuss and shape this future, the Idaho Transportation Board has established the Forum on Transportation Investment. This panel will be composed of key individuals who are in a position to assist in developing the policies and strategies that will ensure Idaho's bright future.

A glimpse into the 21st Century reveals there are many dimensions to our future. Many of these will greatly influence whether or not we are better off 10 or 20 years from now. One of these is transportation. Transportation is critical to the movement of goods and people. Where transportation systems are robust, well-funded and mature, communities flourish, services abound and opportunities grow. Conversely, one need only look around the country to see how communities who have missed this vital factor in their economic equation have stagnated and declined over the years.

Much of Idaho's future will be written by the decisions made in the next few years – decisions that are hard to make. They must be made carefully, addressing the state's transportation issues holistically and with a clear understanding of the many elements contributing to our mobility.

What will the Forum do?

The Forum will examine all elements of surface transportation including highways, rail and transit. Participants will:

- Examine, document and assess Idaho's transportation needs through 2030 including those already documented by state and local government;
- Investigate and determine if there are additional needs deemed critical by state and local elected officials;
- Examine current transportation finance tools and assess their current and future viability;
- Investigate and assess additional financing tools and determine their future viability for addressing Idaho's transportation needs;
- Overlay needs with possible funding scenarios and assess Idaho's ability to meet its mobility requirements into the future;
- Recommend actions and policies that will assist Idaho in achieving its future transportation vision;
- Submit a final report to the Governor, the Chairmen of the Senate and House Transportation Committees, the Chairman of the Idaho Transportation Board, the Director of the Idaho Transportation Department and other officials as appropriate.

Questions or
Comments?



Contact
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A message from Idaho Transportation Department Director David Ekern



Idaho's citizens have asked for a transportation system that provides multimodal choices and helps Idaho growth while maintaining a good quality of life and environment: a system accomplished at a reasonable cost. The transportation challenges we face seem clear.

*"We need answers and we need strategies
so that we can invest in transportation
with foresight and wisdom."*

Unfortunately, the solutions are not as clear. We need answers and we need strategies so that we can invest in transportation with foresight and wisdom.

The Forum on Transportation Investment is an important opportunity for many to come together to discuss and share ideas for the future. Your support and input in this process is crucial. I encourage you to contact Julie Pipal, ITD's Budget, Policy and Intergovernmental Relations Manager, at 334-8804 with any questions or comments you may have.

Together, we can build a transportation system that gives Idaho the strong future it deserves.

David J. Ekern

Forum on Transportation Investment

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